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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MAZIE K. HIRONO, a Senator from the State of Hawaii.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit who honors those whose walk is blameless, we praise You for being with us this day. Lord, You have embraced our Nation as a worthy possession, providing us with protection when we need it most.

Sustain our lawmakers as they seek to do Your will. Empower them to see You more clearly, love You more dearly, and follow You more nearly this day and always. May they look to You for guidance, claiming Your promise to direct their steps. In challenging seasons, give them the wisdom to lift their eyes to You, receiving Your grace and mercy.

Most holy God, thank You for Your love and faithfulness.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,

PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,

Washington, DC, November 15, 2021.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable MAZIE K. HIRONO, a Senator from the State of Hawaii, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,

President pro tempore.

Ms. HIRONO thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADERSHIP TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Graham Scott Steele, of California, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

TRIBUTE TO PATRICK LEAHY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, earlier today, our distinguished President pro tempore, the senior Senator from Vermont, announced he will conclude his incredible run of Senate service. Senator LEAHY plans to retire at the end of next year, at the conclusion of his eighth term.

Senator LEAHY has served Vermonters in the Senate for longer than anyone in the State's history. Of course, he has also become an all-star

Senate institution in his own right. I think particularly of the opportunities I had to work with Senator LEAHY when we were sharing leadership of the Appropriations Subcommittee for State and Foreign Operations.

It is hard to imagine the Senate without PAT and his lovely wife Marcelle. For now, I just want to salute our colleague on the occasion of his announcement and add my congratulations on his remarkable career thus far.

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Madam President, last week, even more economic data continued to confirm that inflation is hammering working families all across America. In October, consumer prices saw their steepest spike in three decades, the worst inflation surge in more than 30 years.

When I was back home last week, I heard constantly from Kentuckians who have watched their gas prices and grocery prices literally soar. This is happening in every single State. Last month was the fifth straight month in which national consumer prices rose at least 5 percent.

The Democrats' inflation crisis has gotten so bad that Washington Democrats have stopped trying to pretend that it is just transitory and are starting to admit that it is on them to fix it. The same Democrats who spent months denying inflation was a lasting problem, the last people in America to wake up to this reality, are now convinced they are just the people to fix it.

But their supposed solutions are more of the same absurd policies that helped dig this hole in the first place. After months of mostly ignoring the problem, President Biden finally responded to last week's inflation data by insisting that "reversing this trend is a top priority for me."

But—surprise—the President's preferred solution just so happens to be the exact same reckless taxing-and-spending spree his administration has

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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